

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION:

In accordance with the foregoing, claim 14 has been amended. No new matter has been presented by way of the amendments. No claims have been added or cancelled.

Claims 2, 4, 6-10, 12, 14 and 16-23 are pending in the present application. Claims 4, 14 and 21 are independent claims. Reconsideration of the claims in light of the present amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 USC §102 & §103:

Claims 2, 4, 6-10, 12, 14 and 16-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,532,210 to Park (Park). Claim 23 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being obvious over Park in view of US Patent Application No. 2003/0091781 to Arakawa et al. ("Arakawa"). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 4 recites at least the following:

at least one sheet attached to the clamping area to prevent generation and development of cracks near the center hole, the clamping area being recessed such that a surface of the sheet attached to the clamping area is level with or lower than a surface of the lead-in area.

Park fails to suggest or disclose all of the above-recited features of independent claim 4. The Office Action asserts at page 3, item 2, that Park illustrates the above-recited features at FIGS. 4A and 4B. Applicants respectfully disagree because Park at least fails to illustrate or describe a clamping area as recited above. For example, a word search of Park reveals that Park fails to mention the term "clamping area." Moreover, Park states the following regarding the disk portion covered by taping member:

FIGS. 4A and 4B show a disk-type recording medium 10 according to a third embodiment of the present invention, including a taping member 17 disposed around the center hole 10 a as the crack hindering element. ... The annular taping member 17 may cover a predetermined area of the non-recording surface portion 11 ..."
(col. 4, lines 58-66).

Accordingly, the only guidance provided by Park regarding the area of the disk surface to be covered by the taping member is that the taping member "may cover a predetermined area of a non-recording surface portion" and is "disposed around the center hole." Therefore, Park fails

to teach "at least one sheet attached to the *clamping area*," as recited in claim 4.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 4 patentably distinguishes over Park, and should be allowable for at least the above-mentioned reasons. Since similar features recited by independent claims 14 and 21, with potentially differing scope and breadth, are not taught or disclosed by Park, the rejection should be withdrawn and claim 14 and 21 also allowed.

Further, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 12, 16-20, 22 and 23 which variously depend from independent claims 14 and 21, should be allowable for at least the same reasons as claims 14 and 21, as well as for the additional features recited therein.

Amended independent claim 14 recites at least the following:

a material attached to a surface of the clamping area of the optical disc to prevent generation and development of cracks near the center hole

Park fails to suggest or disclose all of the above-recited features of independent claim 14. The Office Action asserts at page 3, item 2, that Park illustrates the above-recited features at FIGS. 4A and 4B. Applicants respectfully disagree, noting that claim 14 has been amended to recite "a clamping area corresponding to an area that is clamped by a clamping structure included in an optical disc drive." Because Park, as also argued above with respect to claim 4, fails to suggest or describe attaching a material to a surface of such a clamping area, claim 14 patentably distinguishes over Park and should be allowed. Claims 16-20, which depends from and includes all of the features of independent claim 14, should be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 14, as well as for the additional features recited therein.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

Serial No. 10/829,386

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: July 11, 2008

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